



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Site Update

San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site

Harris County, Texas

December 2010

This fact sheet will tell you about:

- Current site activities
- Site background
- What happens next?
- Technical Assistance Grant
- For more information

Current site activities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and federal, state and local officials will commence work at the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund site in early December to address source contamination and stabilize the site for longer term cleanup. The site is located near the west bank of the San Jacinto River, north of the I-10 Bridge. This action, known as a Time Critical Removal Action, or TCRA, is to begin with mobilization to the site the week of December 8, 2010 to begin preparation to address the immediate onsite concerns including the pits. Noticeable activity around the site area will ramp up as work gets underway. EPA and its site partners will provide periodic updates to the community on site activities which are expected to last through late Spring, 2011.

The EPA's time critical removal will include the design and construction of a physical protective barrier surrounding waste Ponds 1 and 2 that address the release or threat of release of dibenzo-p-dioxins and polychlorinated dibenzofurans into the San Jacinto River. In addition to the construction of a physical barrier to keep the waste secure, there needs to be restricted public access at the site. Public access restrictions are being put into place. This will include several phases of fencing and warning signage in the area. The restrictions involve placement of security fences and signs to prevent trespassing onto the property. The security fencing will prevent access of unauthorized persons into the entire area containing the waste impounds. Additional sediment and surface water samples will be taken for the design and construction of the protective barrier. The barrier design and construction must be structurally sufficient to withstand forces sustained by the river, including any future erosion and structurally sound for a number of years until a final remedy is designed and implemented. Also, the Houston area is frequently impacted by seasonal severe weather events (i.e. strong force winds

or flooding) and the physical protective barrier must be structurally secure to withstand any potential future extreme weather events like hurricanes.

Site background

The San Jacinto Waste Pits site is a 20-acre land parcel on the western bank of the San Jacinto River, in Harris County, Texas, immediately north of the Interstate Highway 10 (I-10) bridge over the San Jacinto River and is located east of the City of Houston between two incorporated areas known as Channelview and Highlands. The site was constructed in the 1960s for disposal of pulp and paper waste mills. The site is an area of land with a set of two waste ponds consisting of three surface impoundments that were built prior to 1965, by constructing berms west of the main river channel.

The two ponds consist of three surface impoundments containing hazardous substances partially submerged in the San Jacinto River as well as locations where the hazardous substances have been deposited, placed or otherwise come to be located.

The site was placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) on March 19, 2008. The NPL is the EPA's list of uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for long term cleanup under the federal Superfund program.

What happens next?

EPA, in cooperation with TCEQ, will continue to develop the draft Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for the site. The RI/FS frames the longer term clean-up plan for the site. The impacted communities will have opportunities to provide input to the RI/FS. This action will lead to a Proposed Plan for cleanup being developed which will be shared with the community. EPA and TCEQ held an early, pre RI/FS completion community engagement activity in July 2010 to ensure that the impacted communities begin to have an opportunity to provide comments and input into the proposed design of the site characterization deliverables. Agencies will continue to collaborate on the RI/FS and the best possible practices to inform and involve site visitors, residents, local, state and federal partners on site health concerns and future site-related activities.

Technical Assistance Grant

EPA is finalizing a Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) to a coalition of two local organizations (Galveston Bay Foundation, and Texans Together) who will work together to interpret site information and data for the community with the assistance of a Technical Advisor.

For more information

U.S. EPA

Valmichael Leos
Superfund Remedial Project Manager
214.665.2283 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

Stephen Tzhone
Superfund Remedial Project Manager
214.665.8409 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

Donn Walters
**Superfund Community Involvement
Coordinator / Public Liaison**
214.665.6483 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

Barbara Nann
Superfund Regional Counsel
214.665.2157 or 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free)

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Luda Voskov
Project Manager,
Superfund Section
512-239-6368

Crystal Taylor
Community Relations, Superfund Section
512.239.3844

Texas Department of State Health Services
Nancy Ingram, Community Involvement
512.776.6572

Site Repository
Stratford Branch Library
509 Stratford Street
Highlands, Texas

**All inquiries from the news media should be directed to
the Region 6 Press Office at 214.665.2200.**

San Jacinto Waste Pits Superfund Site on the internet
www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/pdffiles/0606611.pdf
www.epaossc.org/SanJacWPremoval

To receive a Spanish translation of this fact sheet call U.S. EPA at 1.800.533.3508 (toll-free).

Para recibir una traducción en español de esta hoja de datos, comunicarse con la Agencia de Protección del Medio Ambiente de los EEUU (la EPA) al número de teléfono 1.800.533.3508 (llamada gratis).



Region 6
1445 Ross Ave. (6SF-VO)
Dallas, TX 75202